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## John Bailey New York City Coiner by Gary A. Trudgen

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## JOHN BAILEY - NEW YORK CITY COINER

by

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### INTRODUCTION

John Bailey's brief involvement with the state coinages during the Confederation Period of the United States assured him a permanent niche in American numismatics; however, he is better remembered today for his work as a cutler. During the Revolutionary War he fabricated the sword that Commander in Chief George Washington wore into battle. This deed earned him a firm spot in American history. John Bailey was a skilled artisan who lived a long and respectable life. This is his story.

### AMERICAN IMMIGRANT

Few details are known of John Bailey's early years; however, we do know that he was born in Yorkshire, England, circa 1736. Also, at an early age he was apprenticed in the Town of Sheffield to learn the cutler's trade. Around 1755, John Bailey, then 19 years old, immigrated to America. His older brother William, age 20, accompanied him, and they settled in New York City. At the time, New York was a small provincial town of about 11,000 inhabitants. It was located at the southern tip of Manhattan Island with Wall Street serving as the northern boundary. The population was a mixture of Dutch and English. John began to ply his trade.

At some point in time John Bailey joined in partnership with James Youle. Youle, who was approximately four years younger than Bailey, had also been trained in the cutlery trade in Sheffield, England. In 1771 they were located opposite the Merchants Coffee House, a four story structure built around 1740 and located at the southeast corner of Wall and Water Streets. It was used regularly by prominent businessmen for auctions and other meetings. The building in which Bailey and Youle ran their business had been erected at Bailey's expense. It was a tall structure, towering neighboring buildings and providing an unobstructed view up the East River as far as Corlaer's Hook. The location was excellent because of their proximity to the Merchants Coffee House. In addition, their business was large enough to require the employment of additional artisans and a clerk (1). The following ad, which was placed in the March 4, 1771 issue of the *New-York Gazette and Weekly Mercury*, gives a detailed glimpse into their business.

"Bailey & Youle, Cutlers from Sheffield at Their Shop Near the Merchants Coffee House, Makes all sorts of surgeons instruments, trusses, steel collars for children, iron for lame legs, and silversmith tools; likewise grinds all sorts of knives, razors, shears, and scissars, to look as neat as when new; also fixes new blades into any kind of hafts; cut gentlemen and ladies names, numbers for numbering linen, and books, wherewith they give either red or black ink which will not wash out, and may be used by any person without trouble or inconveniency. They likewise have for Sale, Silk stockings, silver hafted knives and forks, ivory and ebony ditto, red wood, plain and silver ferrel'd ditto, stag, buck and bone ditto, carving knives and forks, pen-knives of all sorts, pocket, garden ditto, razors of all sorts, bones and razor straps, fine cast steel scissars, common ditto of all sorts, taylors shears and thimbles, tortoiseshell combs, and common butcher knives, saws, steels and cleavers, shoemakers knives of all sorts, cock gaffs, netting and knitting needles, sword canes with cocks, plain ditto, silver seals and steel blocks, silver plated ditto, double and single plane irons, carving gouges and chissels of all sorts, watch crystals, and silver buckles of the neatest fashions. N.B. They give the greatest price for old gold and silver lace, and old gold and silver."

(1) Notes begin on page 1171

Bailey's building included living quarters, a workshop, and a store. In the store they sold their services, items of their own manufacture, and imported items. It is evident that John Bailey was the senior partner of their firm and that he was prospering.

John Bailey was a member of the Church of England and a parishioner of Trinity Church Parish in New York City. On May 7, 1772 he wed Ann Brickstock. He was approximately 36 years old at the time (2). The marriage ceremony was performed by the Reverend Samuel Auchmuty, D.D., rector of Trinity Church Parish (3). John and Ann Bailey had at least seven children, two sons and five daughters (4). Their son James S. Bailey was the most prominent of their offspring.

Around the time of his marriage, John Bailey's partnership with James Youle dissolved. The breakup was an amicable one because later in 1784 James Youle and his wife June jointly sponsored the birth of Bailey's son James. Youle advertised independently on May 18,

1772 and was now located in the Fly Market. Bailey remained in his building opposite the Merchants Coffee House, operating his cutlery business at the sign of the Cross Swords. In addition to his cutlery business John leased part of his premises to James Yeoman (5). Yeoman was a watch and clock maker who was located at the sign of the White Dial. Yeoman was known for his cheerful comic powers and his pleasant courteous disposition.

Reverend Samuel Auchmuty, D.D.

Rector (1764-1777) of  
Trinity Church Parish



John Bailey Advertisement, October 19, 1772  
New York Gazette and the Weekly Mercury

Bailey was a trusted leader among his peers, as demonstrated by an extant letter, dated June 7, 1775, which shows Bailey traveling to Albany, New York to settle a financial matter with a James Mather (6). Bailey, who was the principal creditor, represented himself and several other creditors.

## REVOLUTIONARY WAR

After the end of the French and Indian War in 1763, the English government decided that the American colonists should pay for their military protection; however, the colonists were determined that they would not accept any obligations imposed upon them in which they had no vote. The people of Massachusetts took the lead, resulting in the so-called Boston Massacre in 1770 and the Boston Tea Party in 1773. Finally, open hostilities began on April 19, 1775 with the battle of Lexington/Concord. John Bailey witnessed these troubled and epoch times.

While the British army was under siege in Boston, a British battleship was dispatched from Boston to New York City to bolster the shaky authority of the Royal officials in New York. The ship was the 64-gun "Asia", commanded by Captain Vandeput. It arrived in New York Harbor on May 26, 1775 and remained in New York waters for over a year. Late one Wednesday night, on August 23, 1775, the provincials began removing the cannon from Fort George, located at the southern tip of the city. As a caution against such action, the "Asia" fired several warning shots which sent

the city into a frenzy; however, the workers decided to defy the warning and soon went back to their work. Around three o'clock in the morning the "Asia" fired again. This time a full 32-gun broadside lit up the sky and shook the city. Just before this happened, Ann Bailey, who was alarmed by all of the noise and commotion, had come out onto her porch with an infant in her arms. The ship was in the East River opposite Bailey's residence, and when the broadside was fired, a cannon ball whizzed near her head. She quickly retreated to her cellar for the remainder of the night and all of the following day. While in her gloomy retreat she nourished herself by eating bivalves [oysters] that had been stored there.

This action was only a prelude of what was to come. When it became obvious that the British position in Boston was untenable, George Washington correctly reasoned that their next objective would be New York City and he sent General Charles Lee of the Continental Army to the city to construct fortifications against attack. Lee arrived on Sunday February 4, 1776, and that evening British general Sir Henry Clinton arrived in a 24-gun frigate, accompanied by a transport ship. With the immediate threat of war at their doorstep, the townspeople panicked and began to evacuate the city. It is very likely that John Bailey removed his family from the city at this time. It's told that he placed his family in a wagon, along with two negro servants, and drove north out of the city. At this time, John's brother William was residing in Cortlandt Manor (7).

Cortlandt Manor consisted of 86,000 acres and was located along the eastern shore of the Hudson River in Westchester County. William Smith's memoirs place Bailey in Peekskill in February 1777, and since Peekskill was located in Cortlandt Manor, it is a good assumption that Bailey sought refuge with his brother (8). After safely settling his family, John Bailey returned to New York City to procure his furniture and arrange his business affairs; however, much to his chagrin, he found that his clerk, whom he had left in charge of his store, had sold out its contents, pocketed the proceeds, and absconded.



On his return to the city Bailey found New York a near ghost town. The harbor was empty of commercial shipping, and ordinary business was slowed or stopped altogether. Everywhere, houses and shops stood empty or closed. A year earlier, in 1775, the city population had been approximately 25,000, now it was down to around 10,000 people. Later, just before the Battle of Long Island in August 1776, the population was at its lowest of 5,000. After the British gained control of the city, which they occupied for the remainder of the war, the population began to grow again as Loyalists moved back into the city.

As a cutler John Bailey found a ready market for his wares during the Revolutionary War. William Smith's referenced memoir confirms this and shows Bailey's willingness to support the patriot forces; however, John's brother William did not share the same sympathies. He supported the mother country, and in 1782 he served as a captain-lieutenant in the Loyal American Regiment commanded by Colonel Beverley Robinson (9). This political disagreement between the two brothers was probably the reason Bailey did not remain in Peekskill for the remainder of the war. From Peekskill Bailey removed to Fredericksburg,

Hilt of a Sword Fabricated by John Bailey  
See Appendix A, No. 5



George Washington's  
Service Sword  
Fabricated by John Bailey  
while in Fishkill, NY  
Courtesy - Smithsonian Institution

In 1777 an armory was established in Fishkill, New York to repair and manufacture weapons for the patriot army. It soon became a focal point of activity, attracting many of the principal officers of the Continental Army. In 1778, Thomas Anburey, a British officer captured at the Battle of Saratoga, described Fishkill as follows:

"...not more than 50 houses, in the space of near 3 miles, but this place has been the principal depot of Washington's army, where there are magazines, hospitals, workshops, etc. which form a town of themselves; they are erected near a wood, at the foot of a mountain, where are a great number of huts, which have been the winter quarters of the American Army... Near the magazines are some well-constructed barracks, with a prison, surrounded with loft pallisadoes."

Ambitious to make the best of the situation, Bailey knew that Fishkill was the ideal location for his much needed talents. In the May 14, 1778 issue of the *New-York Packet and the American Advertiser* he placed the following ad:

"John Bailey, Cutler from New-York, is removed from Fredericksburgh to Fish-kill, where he intends to carry on his business extensively in its several branches. Workmen are much needed, such as Cutlers, capable of making Surgeons instruments, who can file well, Silver Smiths, White and Black-smiths who will meet with the best encouragement."

From the ad it can be seen that Bailey felt there was enough work to require the services of many additional artisans. It is not known whether his business at Fishkill ever reached the proportions he envisioned.

He then purchased the Rogers' farm of 200 acres, located just west of the Village of Fishkill. Fishkill Creek ran through the center of this farm with a small brook emptying into the creek. He constructed a forge, cutlery and blacksmith shop near the brook, prompting the small stream to be henceforth known as Forge Brook. Bailey's youngest daughter, Charlotte, claimed that Bailey actually worked the farm in addition to his cutlery pursuits. She goes on to say that he could produce two dozen swords a week and that he even tanned the leather for the scabbards, which her mother would then stitch into shape (10). She also claimed that both George Washington and the Marquis de Lafayette were at times the guests of her father.

Sometime during the fall of 1778 John Bailey manufactured a silver mounted hunting sword for George Washington who reportedly wore the sword throughout the remainder of the Revolution making it the most famous sword of American origin (11). Now held in the Smithsonian Institution, this sword has a slightly curved 30 inch length blade. The grips of the hilt are green stained ivory and increase in diameter from quillions to pommel and are wound with a strip of silver. The pommel is carved in a shell design and topped with a silver capstan rivet. The quillions, like all the exposed metal parts of the hilt, are silver mounted. They are formed into an elongated "S" with the ends shaped into serpent heads. On one side of the juncture of the quillions is engraved a trophy of arms. On the opposite side is a similar panoply of arms surmounted by a bear's head. Both designs are flanked by engraved oak leaves.

A silver ferrule projects downward between the quillions and blade. It is made such that it fits tightly over the throat of the scabbard. The scabbard is blackish-russet leather, encircled with silver bands at the throat and middle. In addition, there is a silver tip at the end of the scabbard. The middle band has a carrying ring and the throat is etched "J Bailey / Fish Kill." Bailey's name appears in script, while "Fish Kill" is in print (Additional information concerning swords fabricated by John Bailey is presented in Appendix A).

Colonel Hugh Hughes, Deputy Quartermaster of the Continental Army who was John Bailey's neighbor in Fishkill, kept a letter book containing his correspondence with General George Washington and Staff. Within this letter book there are two separate correspondences that center around John Bailey. These letter exchanges occurred in April of 1781, and they provide a contemporary glimpse of John Bailey while in Fishkill. The first communication was with George Washington:

"5 April, 1781 General Washington presents his compliments to Col. Hughes and begs the favor of him to request Mr. Bailey to put a Blade into the Inclosed Handle of a Knife —and soon—."

Colonel Hughes replied the same day:

"Your Excellency's Note, enclosing the Pen knife, was this moment handed me. I will carry it to Bailey's immediately and have it done."

Approximately two weeks later, on April 21, 1781, Colonel Hughes returned the knife with the following note:

"I have the Honour to Inclose your Excellency the Knife you sent me. If the Point is not agreeable, it shall be altered whenever your Excellency is pleased to order it back."

At the time these notes were exchanged, Washington was in Newburgh, directly across the Hudson River from Fishkill. As previously reported, Bailey had fabricated Washington's service sword; therefore, as Bailey's daughter Charlotte claimed, it is likely that Bailey knew Washington personally. The first note from Washington seems to confirm this and shows that Washington continued to employ Bailey for his cutlery needs.

The second exchange of letters occurred between Lieutenant Colonel Tench Tilghman and

Hughes. Tilghman was Washington's aide and confidential secretary. On April 16, 1781 Tilghman wrote the following to Hughes:

"If you have occasion to pass your neighbor, Bailey, be good enough to remind him that he has a Cutteau of mine to new mount. You know he wants jogging."

Three days later Hughes replied to Tilghman:

"Your Cutteau is not quite finished. The scabbard is made but there are some small matters to do yet. Bailey says he has not Ingredients to stain the Handle. He promises to compleat the rest in two or three days, but you are no stranger to the man."

This exchange of letters graphically shows that John Bailey had gained a reputation for being tardy in his dealings; a good indication that he was overwhelmed with work. Also, as stated in Hughes' reply, he was having difficulty in obtaining the raw materials he required in his trade. Both of the preceding conditions would be expected during wartime. It can also be inferred from this correspondence that Bailey lacked the necessary artisans that he had sought in his 1778 ad.

## PEACE

Peace finally came in 1783, and America was now an independent nation. On September 1, 1783, John Bailey, along with 32 other British born residents who had supported the American Revolution, petitioned Governor George Clinton at Newburgh, New York to be granted citizenship. The British evacuated New York City on November 25, 1783, and the patriot exiles began to return to the city. With no reason to remain in Fishkill, Bailey also returned to the city. The March 31, 1784 issue of the *New York Gazette and Country Journal* contained the following notice:

"For Sale, his Farm of 200 acres, in Fishkill, four miles from the Landing, in good cultivation, with buildings, cider-mill, etc. Fishkill Creek running through the center of the farm, etc. Also all the farming utensils, etc. For further particulars enquire of Mrs. Bailey on the premises, or John Bailey, No. 22 Little Dock Street, N.Y. where he now carries on the Cutlery Business, in all its various branches."

Bailey sold his farm to Robert Brett, reportedly at a great loss (12). The house which he and his family had occupied on the farm was demolished in 1849. His workshop, which had been used for some time as a stable, was also destroyed.

When Bailey returned to New York City he found ruin and desolation everywhere. Over a quarter of the city had been destroyed by fire during the British occupation. On September 20-21, 1776 a great fire had destroyed 493 buildings along the west side of the city. Then on August 3, 1778 fire again destroyed 64 structures at the southern tip of the city in the vicinity of Cruger's Wharf, Little Dock, and Dock Streets. Thus, decent housing was terribly expensive and adding to the problem, money was extremely scarce. Nevertheless, the city experienced a phenomenally rapid postwar recovery. When Bailey returned to the city in early 1784, the population was around 12,000. By the middle of 1786, the population had doubled. By 1790, New York City was the largest city in the new nation, and the effects of the war had practically disappeared.

For some reason John Bailey did not resume occupancy of his building located across from the Merchants Coffee House at the corner of Wall and Water Streets. Perhaps it had been severely damaged or destroyed during the British occupation. Instead, he purchased property at No. 22

Little Dock Street, in the area that had been devastated by fire in 1778. Here, in the heart of the marine district, he continued his cutlery business. His daughter Charlotte relates that at first he was uncertain whether he wished to continue in the cutlery trade. He had considered changing professions and becoming a tanner, because of the considerable experience he had gained in that trade while in Fishkill.

A study of Bailey's recorded land conveyances in New York County, reveals the following information (See Appendix B for a summary of these land conveyances). He owned property on the south side of Little Dock Street, which included a dwelling house. This appears to be the No. 22 address. When Bailey moved back to the city in 1784, he also rented property on the north side of the same street for one year before he purchased it from Nicholas Jones on August 10, 1785 (13). This lot included a building or buildings and was apparently used by Bailey for his workshop. It appears to be the No. 20 Little Dock Street address that Bailey gave in his business advertisements after 1791; however, the New York City directories of the time list it as No. 21 Little Dock Street (See Appendix C for a summary of the directory listings for John Bailey). Street numbering was haphazard at this time, which may explain this discrepancy. Bailey maintained his residence at No. 22 Little Dock Street until 1791 (14). At this time he moved his residence to the No. 20 / No. 21 address and sold his property at No. 22 Little Dock Street to an old acquaintance, Anthony L. Bleecker (15).

Not long after Bailey reestablished himself, the city sought his skills in its postwar recovery efforts. He was contracted to fabricate the iron work required to hang a fire bell and once he had completed the iron work, Bailey himself hung the bell, along with another smaller bell. He charged the city 10 pounds for this work in a bill dated November 8, 1784 (16).

After the Revolution, artisans supported a strong federal government. In an effort to promote their political views in New York, the General Society of Mechanics and Tradesmen was founded in 1785 by representatives of 31 different trades. The society's membership consisted mainly of New York City's more prominent and well-to-do craftsmen. John Bailey was a member. The society was democratically organized under a chairman, deputy chairman, secretary, and treasurer. Members were charged dues which were used to provide social security and a school for members and their children, as well as to cover other miscellaneous expenses. A handsomely engraved certificate was issued to each member.

In February 1786 tragedy struck the family of John Bailey's old partner, James Youle. Youle, age 46, was killed in his workshop when a fast turning grindstone split apart into four pieces. One of the pieces struck Youle in the chest. A notice in the February 27th issue of the *New-York Packet* stated that James Youle was "...an ingenious mechanic, a peaceable honest and useful citizen and has left a widow and nine children to deplore their loss." Not long after this melancholy event, tragedy struck again. James Youle's wife, June, died leaving three underage children. The children, Timothy, Thomas, and June, were cared for by their uncle, John Youle (17).

## STATE COINAGES

The Articles of Confederation, which were adopted on March 1, 1781, allowed each state to produce its own coinage, with the Continental Congress serving as a regulating authority. Some states chose to coin their own copper money because of a scarcity of small change and the abundance of lightweight counterfeit coppers (18). They hoped that their legitimate, full weight copper currency would suppress the circulation of lightweight bogus coppers and also meet the small change needs of their people.

In 1787, during the 10th session of the New York Legislature, there was considerable interest in establishing a copper coinage within the state. Petitions were read in the New York State Assembly on five separate occasions from individuals requesting a grant to coin copper for the state. During this session the Assembly met in New York City from January 12 through April 21. On Monday, February 12, the following entry is found in the Assembly's Journal:

"The several petitions of John Bailey and Ephraim Brasher, relative to the Coinage of Copper within the state were read, and referred to Mr. Brooks, Mr. Galatian, and Mr. Duboys."

The subject petitions apparently no longer exist, and the wording of the preceding journal entry is somewhat ambiguous. The question arises whether Bailey and Brasher filed these petitions separately or in concert; however, study of the pattern coins that were struck and are attributed to Bailey and Brasher indicates that they did cooperate to some degree.

Ephraim Brasher (1744-1810) was a well-known goldsmith, silversmith, and jeweler; but, like John Bailey, he also worked at the cutlery trade before the American Revolution. As a cutler, Brasher is best known for the dress sword he fabricated for Ethan Allen, the popular and controversial leader of Vermont's Green Mountain Boys. The Allen sword is a splendid example of the dog head pommel. The dog's eyes are tiny jewels and the hilt is coated with a thin layer of gold. Thus, because Bailey and Brasher had both worked at the same trade in the same city, they undoubtedly knew each other prior to their coinage involvement. Also, it is claimed that they worked together briefly in making silverware (19).

The New York State legislature chose not to authorize its own copper coinage but instead passed an act to regulate the circulation of miscellaneous copper coins within the state. Therefore, Bailey and Brasher were disappointed in their efforts to obtain a coinage grant in their home state; however, just across the harbor, in the State of New Jersey, coppers were being produced under contract for that state.

In the summer of 1789 a copper currency crisis occurred, the famous "Coppers Panic of 1789". Beginning in 1785, domestic and foreign sources had steadily increased the volume of copper coin in circulation, but many of these coins were unauthorized and underweight. Accordingly, public distrust grew until copper coins suffered a drastic loss in value and for the most part ceased to circulate. In New York City, on July 21, 1789, the Common Council recommended that coppers pass at 48 per shilling. Prior to this, coppers had passed at the rate of 14 to the shilling until 1787, when a legislative act, which regulated copper coins within the state, lowered the rate to 20 per shilling. During the copper crisis, some New York City merchants had even advertised that they would only accept coppers at the rate of 60 per shilling.

During the height of this crisis, on August 1, 1789, John Bailey was summoned to appear before a New York City official. He gave the following testimony:

"City of New York, ss. Personally appeared before me, Jermiah Wool, one of the Alderman of the said City, John Bailey, of the said City of New York, cutler, who being duly sworn, deposeth and saith, That since the fifteenth day of April, 1788, he hath not, either by himself or others, made or struck any coppers bearing the impression of those circulated by the state of New Jersey, commonly called Jersey coppers: and that what he so made previous to the said fifteenth of April, was in conformity to, and by authority derived from an Act of the State of New Jersey, entitled "An Act for the establishment of a Coinage of Copper in that State, passed June the first, 1786.

John Bailey

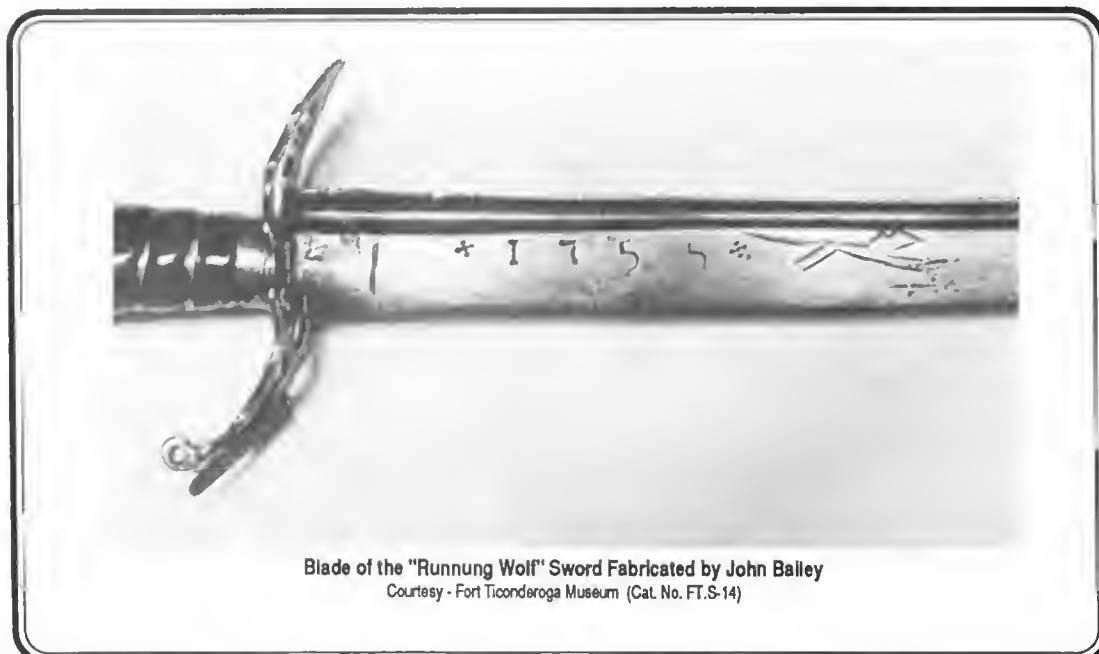
Sworn this first day of August 1789 Before me, Jeremiah Wool, Alderman."

This affidavit shows that Bailey had entered into an agreement with the New Jersey coinage contractors and had struck New Jersey coppers on a subcontract basis. The contractors, Albion Cox, Thomas Goadsby, and Walter Mould, had agreed to strike 3 million coppers for the state within a 2 year period. The coinage period was from June 1, 1786 through June 1, 1788. For this privilege they were to pay 10% of their coinage back to the state in either the coppers they struck or in New Jersey paper money; however, disagreements between the three men jeopardized their ability to fulfill the contract and broke apart their partnership. Thus, Bailey's assistance was apparently sought in an effort to meet their obligation to the State of New Jersey.

New York State court records provide some insight into John Bailey's involvement with these three men. In the Court of Chancery of New York State, on February 2, 1788, John Bailey stood surety for 40 pounds for Walter Mould. Mould was suing John Stiles (20). Again, on May 23, 1788, Bailey stood surety for Walter Mould. This time for 30 pounds in a suit Mould filed against his former partner, Thomas Goadsby. This action took place in the New York State Supreme Court (21).

The two preceding court actions show that Bailey served as Walter Mould's benefactor during the New Jersey coinage period. Goadsby and Cox had quarreled with Mould before the three had struck their first copper and, as a result, the state legislature allowed Goadsby and Cox to strike their two million coppers independent of Mould. Goadsby and Cox conducted their coinage in Rahway, New Jersey, while Mould moved to near Morristown, New Jersey to strike his one million coppers. Because of these problems, Walter Mould got a late start in his coinage effort. Therefore, Mould may have sought Bailey's help when it became apparent that he would be unable to strike his allotted quantity of coppers within the time period allowed. The partnership of Goadsby and Cox, however, also experienced difficulties which endangered their ability to fulfill their coinage commitment. Matthias Ogden, the man who had promoted the coinage act while a member of the New Jersey Legislature, was given authority by the courts to see that their coinage was completed. Accordingly, it is possible that Ogden was the one who hired Bailey to strike New Jersey coppers even though, at present, there is no known connection between Bailey and Ogden, which lends more credence to the Walter Mould conjecture.

The New Jersey coppers that were struck by John Bailey are punch linked to the other coins that



Blade of the "Running Wolf" Sword Fabricated by John Bailey  
Courtesy - Fort Ticonderoga Museum (Cat. No. FT.S-14)

are attributed to Bailey and Brasher (22). Bailey's New Jersey coppers are dated 1788, and they bear an apparent mint mark in the reverse legend. The mint mark, which is small and lacking in detail, is that of a running animal. Early numismatists concluded that the animal is a fox, resulting in the nickname of "running fox" New Jersey coppers. More recently, however, some numismatists have argued that the running animal is really a horse (23). The significance of the running animal on Bailey's New Jersey coppers has never been satisfactorily explained. At first thought, the "running wolf" on the blade of one of Bailey's extant swords (Appendix A, Item 2) appears to be a tie-in; however, as can be seen from the photo, the "running wolf" is crudely engraved and almost certainly not Bailey's work. Also, it is very unlikely that the "1755" date marks the year in which the sword was fabricated. The sword is finely made and not that of a newly trained cutler just immigrated to America. Instead, the "running wolf" and date must have been added by the owner, Captain William Wikoff, to commemorate some event in his family's history. It is reported that Wikoff, who was in the New Jersey Line, carried the sword during the American Revolution. Captain Wikoff was at the battles of Long Island, White Plains, and Monmouth. Also, it is currently not understood why the animal on the sword has been deemed a wolf. As can be seen, the type of animal is not obvious.

Bailey's New Jersey coppers were the last type of coins that he struck. These coppers are punch and style linked to five other types of coins, all dated 1787 and therefore are attributed to John Bailey in partnership with Ephraim Brasher. The extent of their copartnership and details of their coinage operation, however, are not known. Also, the location of their mint is also unknown, but it must have been in or nearby New York City.

Three of the five coin types are believed to be patterns, which would have been minted in conjunction with the coinage petitions they filed with the State Assembly. These patterns are the NOVA EBORAC and EXCELSIOR coppers, and the Brasher gold doubloon. The BRASHER DOUBLOON is perhaps the best known American coin in the world. It has been the subject of screen and novel. The coin bears Brasher's full surname across the obverse. Only six are known to exist. There is also a seventh specimen struck from the same dies on a cut down planchet. This specimen has been termed a half doubloon. It is unknown why the BRASHER DOUBLOON was struck because New York State was considering only a copper coinage.

The EXCELSIOR coppers were also minted in limited numbers. There are three varieties, all very rare today (24). The obverse of these coppers bear the New York State arms with the state motto, *Excelsior*, beneath. The national motto, *E Pluribus Unum*, appears in the reverse legend along with a heraldic eagle and thirteen stars, one for each state. There are four die varieties of the NOVA EBORAC coppers. Two of these are very rare, while the other two are more common. The two rare varieties, known as the "small head" and "large head", are thought to have been struck in conjunction with their coinage petitions. The two other varieties, known today as "figure right" and "figure left", were apparently struck later, when it became certain that New York State was not going to issue a coinage grant. A paper detailing the NOVA EBORAC coppers is in preparation and will appear later this year in *The Colonial Newsletter*.

The remaining two coin types, which are attributed to Bailey, are copies of coins that were then in circulation. Since copper coins were not legal tender at this time, many coiners produced their own unauthorized version of other coppers of the day. The first is a Connecticut copper, known by numismatists as the "Muttonhead" in reference to the large brutish looking head on the obverse. There are two die varieties, one very rare and the other fairly common. From the die problems the coiners experienced with this coin type, it is apparent that these were the first dies engraved by John Bailey. The second type is the British halfpence, the most common copper then in circulation and used primarily for small transactions. There are several known varieties of American-made British halfpence. Most of these are attributed to James F. Atlee, a prolific



NOVA EBORAC



EXCELSIOR



BRASHER DOUBLOON



MUTTONHEAD



ATLEE HALFPENCE

TYPICAL COINAGE TYPES DISCUSSED IN TEXT

diesinker during the state coinage era (25). However, there are four varieties that appear to have been a joint effort between Atlee and Bailey. The dies for these varieties were prepared with the same letter and numeral punches that were used to engrave the BRASHER DOUBLOON dies, while the artistic style of the central devices appears to be that of James F. Atlee (26).

John Bailey is usually credited for engraving most of the coinage dies that were used in his and Ephraim Brasher's coinage operation, although, there are no known records to confirm this. It appears that he worked as a diesinker and coiner throughout the year of 1787 and during the first quarter of 1788 (27). When the states ratified the new Constitution, that had been hammered out in Philadelphia during the summer of 1787, it spelled doom for the state coinages. The new federal government prohibited coinage by the states. Bailey very likely considered his participation in the state coinages to be one of his less successful business ventures.

## A NEW ERA

The year 1789 was an exciting time to be living in New York City. The city was both the capital of the state and of the nation. It bustled with activity and new people including members of Congress, dignitaries, and sightseers, and business was excellent.

The Federal Constitution became effective on March 4, 1789. To usher in the new era, the battery guns were fired, and the bells of the city were rung. The first Congress held under the Constitution met at Federal Hall, located at the northeast corner of Wall and Nassau Streets. On April 23rd president elect George Washington triumphantly entered the city and was escorted to the Walter Franklin house, on the corner of Cherry Street and Franklin Square, which had been prepared for his occupancy. One week later, on April 30th, he was inaugurated president on the balcony of Federal Hall. Following the inauguration Washington walked north to St. Paul's Chapel for a special service conducted by Bishop Samuel Provoost. It was a day of celebration, the streets were crowded with people anxious to get a glimpse of the "great Washington." Again the bells were rung and guns fired. In the evening the city was ablaze with lights and illuminations; for two hours, from 8 to 10 PM, a spectacular display of fireworks attracted the attention of everyone, and no doubt John Bailey was among the enthusiastic well-wishers.

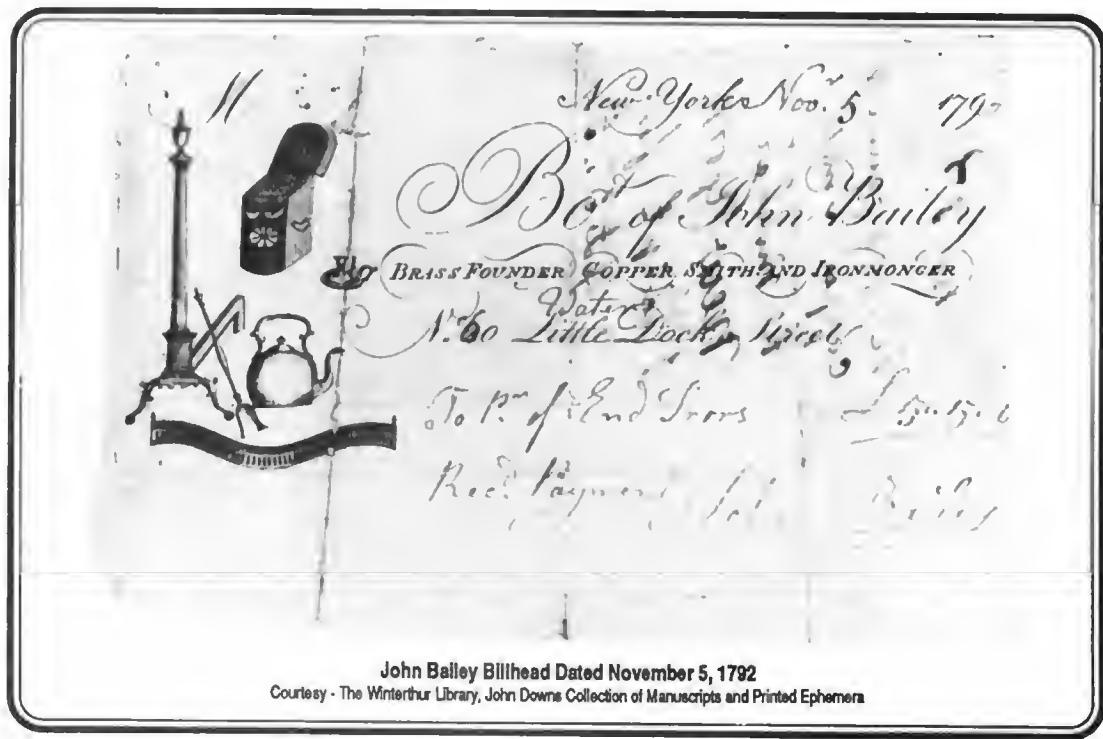
The first federal census, taken in 1790, records that John Bailey kept two black servants. During this period, most well-to-do families within the city did likewise and, since few of the slaves were skilled, they generally served as domestic help.

Extant Mayor's Court records from this period reveal that Bailey was involved in litigation from time to time, no doubt business related. He also did his civic duty by serving as a juror in this court. Bailey's old acquaintance and business partner, Ephraim Brasher, was the city coroner. Governor George Clinton had appointed him coroner back in March of 1786 (28). In an extant inquisition, dated April 13, 1790, John Bailey was one of thirteen jurors who appeared before Ephraim Brasher to determine the cause of death of Hugh McKinsey. Within the inquisition, which is written in Brasher's hand, the jurors are described as "good and lawful men of the City and County of New York." McKinsey, who had been missing for 12 weeks was found dead at the Old Slip in the East Ward (Bailey's neighborhood). Since McKinsey "was intoxicated with strong drink" when last seen living, the jurors concluded that death was caused by drowning while drunk. The inquisition includes both Bailey's and Brasher's signatures.

Municipal improvement was an ongoing process and in 1792 John Bailey's street, Little Dock, was paved, probably with either cobblestones or bricks. This improvement must have been thoroughly appreciated by Bailey and his fellow residents because it meant relief from dust and mud. During the previous year Bailey had moved from his No. 22 address and was now residing at his No. 20 property.

In 1787, John Bailey is listed in the city directory as a cutler and brass founder. In the following years he is listed only as a cutler; however, starting in 1792 and in the subsequent years he is listed as a brass founder and ironmonger. After the Revolution, Bailey evidently found the cutlery trade to be less attractive than before. This is borne out by his efforts to obtain a coinage contract from the state and his consideration of entering the tannery trade after the war. Finally, in 1792, he fully committed himself to the brass foundry trade. The brass founder was an important artisan in early America. It required a reasonably thorough knowledge of metallurgy and was an art rather than a craft. Erecting a brass foundry took time, a lot of labor and expense, and operation was a dirty laborious business.

One of Bailey's billheads, dated November 5, 1792, has survived the years (29). It is for the sale



of a pair of "End Irons" [Andirons] to an unknown customer for £5.5.0 or \$13.12. As can be noted from the photo, the billhead includes engravings of several items which Bailey manufactured. Shown are fireplace implements, specifically a shovel, fender, and andiron, a teapot, a candlestick holder, and a knife box. The knife box itself was normally constructed from wood, sometimes covered with animal skin. Bailey probably manufactured the brass hardware for the box, which included handles, lock, lock plate, and feet. Also, notice that Bailey advertised himself not only as a brass founder, but as a coppersmith, and ironmonger. Another item to note is the address change. Bailey crossed out the No. 20 Little Dock Street address and wrote in the No. 60 Water Street address. Recorded land conveyances verify that these two addresses were actually the same location. In late 1794, Little Dock Street and Crugar's Wharf were merged into Water Street; thus, this bill shows that Bailey was aware of the coming change and was already beginning to use the new address.

In 1794 John Bailey joined in partnership with George Hedderly and established the New York Bell Foundry. Their ad, which they placed in the April 21, 1794 issue of the *New-York Daily*

**BAILEY & HEDDERLY,  
NEW-YORK  
BELL FOUNDRY.**



Geo. Hedderly, from Eng land, and John Bailey, No. 20, Little Dock Street, New-York, begs 'eare to inform the citizens of the United States, that they have established a bell foundery, in the Bowery, where they intend casting bells, or peals of Church bells set to music, also plantation, turret, ship and hand bells, church, turret, or house bells, hung on the most modern construction, bell mill, and other brasses cast, stocking frames made or repaired, either with or without the twilled, ribb'd or lace machines. G. Hedderly's ances-tors, having been in the bell foundering, and bell hanging business, for upwards of three Centuries past, and he having made it his study from his infancy, hopes that his abilities in the art of bell casting and hanging, will meet the attention of the Citizens of America.

February 27.

New York Bell Foundry Advertisement of April 21, 1794  
*New York Daily Advertiser*

*Advertiser*, gives a good description of this enterprise:

"Bailey & Hedderly, New York Bell Foundry.

Geo. Hedderly from England, and John Bailey No. 20 Little Dock street, New-York begs leave to inform the citizens of United States, that they have established a bell foundery, in the Bowery, where they intend casting Bells, or peals of church bells set to music. Also plantation, turret, ship and hand bells, church turret, or house bells, hung on the most modern construction, bell mill, and other brasses cast, stocking frames made or repaired either with or without the twilled ribb'd or lace machines. G. Hedderly's ances-tors, having been in the bell foundering, and bell hanging business,



Brass Bell Manufactured by John Bailey - Dated 1794  
Courtesy of William Guthman

for upwards of three Centuries past and he having made it his study from his infancy, hopes that his abilities in the art of bell casting and hanging will merit the attention of the citizens of America."

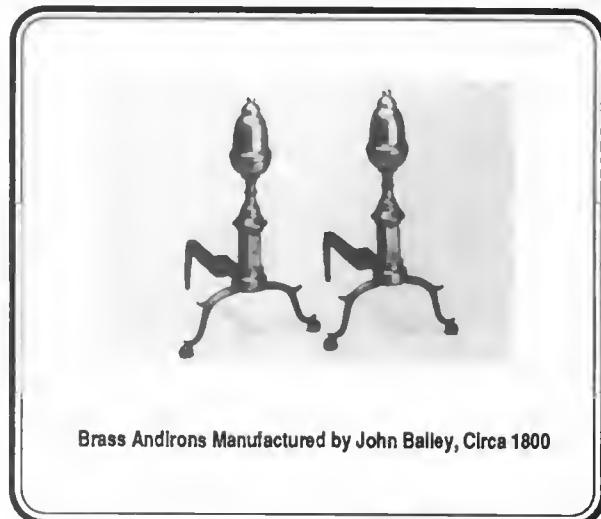
Note that Bailey, in this ad, uses the original No. 20 Little Dock Street address, rather than the new Water Street address. The street name change did not officially take effect until later that year. George Hedderly is listed in the 1794 New York City directory as residing in Bowery Lane.

Bailey's partnership with George Hedderly and their New York Bell Foundry was short lived. It is unknown exactly when they terminated their partnership and ceased operations; however, the following information indicates that their bell foundry was operated for approximately one year. First, there are three extant bells, apparently manufactured at their foundry, which only bear John Bailey's name (See Appendix D). Two of these bells are dated 1794, while the other is not dated. Secondly, New York City Mayor's Court litigation indicates a dispute between Bailey and Hedderly. Recorded in the minutes of this court, during the April 14, 1795 term, is a case where John Bailey sued George Hedderly (30). Also, during the June 2, 1795 term, there is a case where John Bailey was sued by The Society for Establishing Useful Manufactures (31). Although the minutes do not give specific details concerning these cases, they are almost certainly connected with the demise of Bailey and Hedderly's New York Bell Foundry.

After the New York Bell Foundry ceased operations, John Bailey continued in the brass foundry trade. The location of his foundry was probably in the Bowery at the same site as the ill-fated bell foundry (32). He continued to operate a store at his residence, where he sold the items he manufactured. As shown by the following advertisement, which was taken from the November 19, 1798 issue of the *Commercial Advertiser*, he also imported items for sale in his store:

"John Bailey, Brass Founder, No. 60 Water-street,  
Begs leave to inform his friends and the public in general that he has now on hand  
at his Store an elegant and extensive assortment of Hand Irons and other articles in  
the Brass Foundry, of his own manufactory. He has also imported by the latest arrivals  
an elegant assortment of the most fashionable patterns in the plated line viz. Tea and  
Coffee Urns, Pots, Cream Juggs, Cruet Frames, Tea and Table Candle Sticks, Bread  
Baskets, &c. together with every other article in the Ironmongery and Hard-Ware line  
as usual."

As can be seen from this ad, Bailey offered a wide range of metallic items for sale. A customer could purchase an item manufactured in Bailey's own foundry, such as a pair of andirons for his fireplace as well as standard hardware objects, such as locks, tools, and cutlery. To grace the finest homes, Bailey offered an assortment of imported silver plated items "of the most fashionable patterns." John Bailey was no longer just an artisan who was selling his wares. As before the Revolution, he was again a merchant who was importing goods for resale.



Brass Andirons Manufactured by John Bailey, Circa 1800

## A NEW CENTURY

The new century began with sorrow for John Bailey. Ann, his wife of 27 years, died. The *Weekly Museum* of March 8, 1800 carried her obituary:

"Died, on Saturday evening Mrs. Bailey, wife of  
John Bailey, of this city, brass founder."

The cause of her death and the place of her interment are not known. The Manhattan death records are missing for this year, and Trinity Church has no record of her burial.

On October 23, 1804, Bailey sold his property at No. 60 Water Street to two merchants, George Bennet and John W. Gale. The property had appreciated rapidly, and he realized almost five times his purchase price. Bailey then moved to No. 27 Maiden Lane where he remained until his death. At this location he continued as a founder, ironmonger, and merchant.

In 1807, John Bailey, then 71 years old, joined in partnership with his son James S. Bailey. James had been employed as a merchant at No. 31 Greenwich Street since 1803. Their new firm, known as John Bailey and Son, continued in the foundry, ironmongery, and merchant business. In 1809 Bailey and his son gave up the foundry business and continued as merchants, selling hardware, cutlery, silverware, and related items.



John Bailey's Gravestone (Center) in the Churchyard of St. Paul's Chapel

Before he died, John Bailey witnessed the United States' second war with his native country of England. This was the War of 1812 brought on by repressive English policy both on the high seas and on the American Indian frontier in the Northwest.

John Bailey had his last will and testament drawn up on January 7, 1815 (See Appendix E and note 33). He named his son, James S. Bailey, and John Downs as his executors. He was unable to sign his name and had to resort to placing "his mark" on the document. The end was near. He died on Sunday morning January 22, 1815 at the age of 79. His death certificate states that he died of "old age." The obituary notice that appeared the following day in the *New-York Evening Post* stated:

#### DIED

"Yesterday morning Mr. John Bailey, an old and respectable inhabitant of this city, in the 79th year of his age. The relations and friends of the family are respectfully requested to attend his funeral without further invitation, tomorrow afternoon, at four o'clock, from his late residence, No. 27 Maiden-Lane."

Bailey was interred in the churchyard at St. Paul's Chapel, at Broadway and Fulton Street. His original gravestone still stands (34). However, the inscription is worn beyond recognition. Trinity Church records state that the stone originally read "In Memory of John Bailey who departed this life 22nd January 1815 - aged 78 years" (35). Along side John Bailey's grave lies his daughter Jane, who died on October 7, 1814, and his grandson James, an infant who died on September 15, 1816 (36).

After John Bailey's death his son James continued their business until his own untimely death in 1824. In 1816, James is listed at No. 29 Maiden Lane. One year later he had moved to No. 21 Maiden Lane. Just prior to his death, when he was apparently unable to continue the business, he relocated to Prince Street.

#### IN CONCLUSION

John Bailey prospered after immigrating to America and succeeded because he was a talented artisan and a good businessman. His membership in the General Society of Mechanics and Tradesmen is an indication of his affluent status. At the time of his death, his estate was valued at \$24,970.80, a very respectable sum in Bailey's day (See Appendix F).

Like many well-to-do people following the American Revolution, Bailey invested in land. He purchased several lots of land just outside the northern limits of New York City. This turned out to be a very profitable investment because this land appreciated rapidly as the city grew into that area. He also purchased a tract of land in upper New York State along the western shore of Lake Champlain.

Bailey also invested heavily in bank stocks. Over half of the value of his estate was in this type of investment. In at least one instance, Bailey invested directly in a commercial enterprise, the new Tontine Coffee House which was erected in 1792-3 on the site of the old Merchants Coffee House. Like its predecessor, the Tontine Coffee House was the site of many important business transactions. In order to finance the construction, 203 shares were sold at \$200 each by the Tontine Association. John Bailey purchased one share (37).

In any biographical study it is always gratifying to be able to gaze upon the likeness of the subject individual. Unfortunately, no drawing or portrait of John Bailey has been located. Bailey's labors, however, produced many artifacts which are highly valued today, and from these objects, whether it be one of his swords, copper coins, bells, or a pair of andirons, we can gain an appreciation of who John Bailey really was, and of his talents.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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**Nicholas Westbrook** - Director, Fort Ticonderoga Museum, Ticonderoga, NY.

## NOTES to **JOHN BAILEY - NEW YORK CITY COINER**

(1). Messrs. Lucas and Shepard, whitesmiths and cutlers, worked for Bailey from 1768 to 1771 and then started their own business.

(2). There has been some speculation, occasioned by Bailey's age, that this may not have been his first marriage. However, I have found no evidence to support this possibility.

(3). Within the parish there were Trinity Church and two chapels, St. George's and St. Paul's. St. Paul's Chapel is the only colonial church building remaining in New York City today. It opened for worship on October 30, 1766 and was George Washington's place of worship when he was in the city. Also, there have been three Trinity Churches built on the same location at Broadway and Wall Street. The third building was consecrated in 1846 and stands today.

(4). John and Ann Bailey's Children:

## SONS

Augustus: He was born in 1774. John Bailey's will states that Augustus was insane for a long period of time and could not manage his own affairs. He died on June 16, 1816, age 42, and was interred in St. Paul's cemetery.

James S.: He was born on June 1, 1784 and christened on July 16, 1784 in Trinity Church Parish. He married and his wife's name was Eliza. (Trinity Church secondary source information states that James' wife's name was Clara. This information is apparently incorrect. His wife's name is given as Eliza in primary source documents, such as New York County Recorded Land Conveyances.) James died at the age of 40, on July 15, 1824, and was interred in St. John's burying ground. His death certificate states that the cause of death was "dropsy in the chest." At the time of his death he was living at Prince Street (near Greene Street) in New York City.

## DAUGHTERS

Ann: She was probably the first born. She married Daniel Tooker, Jr. on January 19, 1793. Her husband, Daniel, died on April 22, 1806 at the age of 36. Later, Ann married a man named Holmes.

Maria: She married William Lang on January 3, 1796 in Trinity Church Parish of New York City. When John Bailey died, Lang obtained his father-in-law's letters that had been written by George Washington, which he subsequently dispersed.

Harriett: She married Peter Mabie, an accountant. John Bailey excluded this son-in-law from his will, indicating a dislike for him. Perhaps there was a domestic disagreement or perhaps it was political. The Mabie clan was of Dutch descent and they were ardent Loyalists during the American Revolution. Bailey supported the patriots.

Jane: She was born in 1786 and died on October 7, 1814 at the age of 28. Evidently she never married. She is interred in St. Paul's churchyard near her father.

Charlotte: She married George Booker on May 12, 1803 in Trinity Church Parish of New York City. Later she married James Dobbin. She died on April 5, 1862 at the age of 80.

(5). James Yeoman died in May 1773 and John Bailey denied Yeoman's executor, Elias Bland, access to the leased premises. Bland took Bailey to court to obtain access to the premises as recorded in Chancery Court minutes of February 5, 1775.

(6). This letter is contained in Anthony L. Bleecker's letter book. Bleecker wrote to Rutger Bleecker, son of the mayor of Albany, asking him to assist Bailey.

(7). New York County Chancery Court minutes, dated January 3, 1786, establishes William Bailey's last New York State residence as Cortlandt Manor. In this court action the plaintiff, Philip Schuyler, was seeking permission to resell land that he had mortgaged to William Bailey. William had defaulted on the mortgage. Westchester County Sheriff John Thomas placed a notice dated October 19, 1787, in the New York newspapers announcing the sale at public vendue of William Bailey's property. William had resided on a 265 acre farm along the Hudson River.

(8). William Smith had been a member of the Governor's Council and Chief Justice of New York. During the Revolutionary War he sided with the British Government. In his memoirs dated February 5, 1777 he says: "General Washington is executing his new Powers. Mr. Hay had a letter from him dated last Wed: ordering a Seizure of all Side Arms in the Hands of one Bailey a Cutler at Peek's Kill, with an Assurance that he should be paid a reasonable Price for them. The Owner submitted on Sight of the Letter last Friday but begged the finishing of them off as a Favor to prevent the Loss of his Materials collected for that Purpose."

(9). With the cessation of hostilities in 1783, the British government provided shipping at New York City for the evacuation of Loyalists. Land grants in New Brunswick, Canada were given to some of the Loyalists. By July 3, 1783, 1,859 Loyalists had reached St. John's River in New Brunswick. William Bailey was among these exiles. He lived the remainder of his life near Fredericton on St. John's River and died in 1832 at the advanced age of 97.

(10). John Bailey used silver in manufacturing the hilts of his swords. During the war silver was scarce; therefore, when he received a silver coin in payment he would place it in a small mahogany box. When enough coins were collected, they would be melted and worked into the sword hilts.

(11). A historical marker commemorating John Bailey was erected in Fishkill in 1935 by the New York State Education Department. The marker is near Forge Brook on the north side of State Route 52, just east of the Interstate Route 84 overpass. It reads:

WASHINGTON'S SWORD  
now in Smithsonian Institution  
Washington, D.C. was made  
near here by John Bailey, a  
cutler from New York and Fishkill

Also in Fishkill, not far from the historical marker, there is a short by-road off Route 52 named John Bailey Road.

(12). In a postscript to the notice advertising the sale of his farm, Bailey stated that "One third part of the purchase money to be paid down, and the other two-thirds in public securities, issued by the State of New York, will be received in payment." — Also, John Bailey stated that he would give a warranted title to his farm.

(13). Nicholas Jones was a "gentleman" who, during the American Revolution, owned a beautiful estate at Bloomingdale, seven miles north of New York City on the Hudson River. The estate was devastated by the British when they cut his trees for fuel in New York City.

(14). Everett T. Sipsey, in his 1964 article titled "New Facts and Ideas on the State Coinages," incorrectly published John Bailey's 1787 address as 22 Queen Street. See sequential page 122 of *The Colonial Newsletter*. Sipsey had inaccurately copied Bailey's address from David C. Franks' New York City Directory for 1787. Actually, Franks' directory lists Bailey's address as 22 Little Dock Street. Unfortunately, this error has been perpetuated by subsequent writers.

(15). Anthony L. Bleecker was a broker and auctioneer. In 1787 he was located in New York City at No. 208 Water Street. Bleecker advertised that he "buys and sells all manner of goods on commission for persons at home or abroad; charters and freights vessels, procures money at interest and transacts all other the general business of a broker and auctioneer with the greatest integrity, secrecy and dispatch."

(16). The original bill is still extant and is stored in metal file # 6 in the City Clerk's record room.

(17). New York County Chancery Court records of July 1787 contain a petition from John Youle concerning his request to care for the children.

(18). Connecticut, New Jersey, and Vermont issued copper coinage grants to private firms, while Massachusetts erected its own mint.

(19). Breen, Walter H. "Brasher and Bailey: Pioneer New York Coiners, 1787-1792."

(20). Ephraim Brasher had also sued John Stiles, along with Morris Earle. This cause appears in the minutes of the Mayor's Court of New York City during the March 6, 1787 term. The case is apparently concerned with a landlord/tenant dispute.

(21). The author wishes to thank Michael Hodder of Wolfeboro, NH, for providing the information on the two Walter Mould lawsuits.

(22). When coins are punch linked, it means that their respective dies were prepared from the same, or some of the same, letter and numeral punches. Punch linkage suggests that the dies were engraved by the same coinage operation, or individual.

(23). Breen, Walter H. "Encyclopedia of U.S. and Colonial Coins," page 86, 1988.

(24). A group of coins that bear the same legends and central devices is usually made up of several different varieties. Each variety differs from the others within the group because it was struck from different dies. During the state coinage era, the dies were hand prepared, resulting in easily noted variations in detail between the dies of a particular group.

(25). Little is known about James F. Atlee, outside of his involvement with the state coinages. Also, much that is understood of his work with the state coinages has been deduced from the study of the coins themselves. It appears that he first engraved coinage dies during the year 1786 while he was in New York City. During this time he engraved dies for imitation British halfpence and unauthorized Connecticut coppers. Late in 1786 he was apparently hired by Thomas Goadsby and Albion Cox to engrave dies for the Rahway, New Jersey mint. In the spring of 1787 he joined a new coinage firm organized by Thomas Machin. Their mint was located near Newburgh, New York, and they operated until the end of 1789. While at Machin's mint Atlee engraved dies for the Rupert, Vermont mint which was operated by Reuben Harmon. He also engraved dies for imitation British halfpence, and unauthorized Connecticut, New Jersey, and Vermont coppers.

(26). These four varieties are labeled Group 2 in a research paper on American-made British halfpence. This paper, which was written by the author, is titled "James Atlee's Imitation British Halfpence" and was published in the March 1987 issue of *The Colonial Newsletter*.

(27). In an article titled "Vermont Copper Coinage," Ken Bressett inaccurately states that John Bailey was a copartner with Vermont coiners Daniel Van Voorhis and William Coley (page 174). Bressett erroneously concluded that the Bayley in the New York City firm of Van Voorhis, Bayley, and Coley, located at No. 27 Hanover Square, was John Bailey. Instead it was Simon Alexander Bayley as shown by an ad in the July 9, 1785 issue of the *Independent Journal: or General Advertiser*. Also, the Mayor's Court minutes of August 23, 1785 corroborates this claim. Here, in a case involving the firm of Van Voorhis, Bayley, and Coley, their full names are given. A synopsis of the New York Mayor's Court records will be published in a future issue of *The Colonial Newsletter*.

(28). Ephraim Brasher appeared in the Mayor's Court during the March 21, 1786 term and "...produced a Commission under the Great Seal of the State appointing him Coroner of the city and county of New York."

(29). This billhead is owned by The Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum, in Winterthur, Delaware, the accession number is 58.1593. Winterthur Museum, in their Decorative Arts Photographic Collection, has ten objects that are attributed to John Bailey. The first is a patented spit jack which is owned by the Smithsonian Institution. The remaining nine objects are andirons. Six of the andirons are what is termed the double lemon type. Two other have spires atop the uprights, and one pair is decorated with a large sphere as the primary component of the upright.

(30). Hedderly, along with his wife Sarah, was also involved in litigation with three other people during this period. They were Jesse Wright, John Shaw, and Samuel Hay. Hay was the father-in-law of David Brooks, one of the copartners of Thomas Machin's coinage operation (See note 25).

(31). During this period, Bailey was also involved in litigation with John McCarr, Garret Keteltad, and Reuben Smith.

(32). In John Bailey's day, the Bowery was located just north of the city limits.

(33). One of the men who witnessed John Bailey's last will and testament was James Jarvis. This was probably the same James Jarvis, a very active New York City businessman, who had been involved with the state coinages in the 1780's. In 1787 Jarvis became a majority stockholder in the company that was coining coppers for the state of Connecticut. He then obtained a grant from Congress to produce our first federal coinage, the Fugio Cents of 1787.

(34). On February 23, 1957, the New Netherland Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution placed a commemorative marker directly in front of John Bailey's illegible gravestone. The marker is constructed of Vermont marble with a bronze tablet inscribed as follows:

John Bailey  
January 22, 1815, 78 years  
Maker of George Washington's Sword  
in  
The Smithsonian Institution  
This tablet erected by the  
New Netherland Chapter, N.S.D.A.R.  
Marking Its 30th Anniversary  
1957

(35). The quoted inscription from Bailey's gravestone states that Bailey was 78 years old when he died. This disagrees with his obituary and death certificate which both report that he was 79 years old. The gravestones at St. Paul's were first transcribed in 1897. Later references state that the stones were relatively illegible in the late 1920's. This suggests that an error was made in 1897 because of illegibility.

(36). The grandson was a child of James S. and Eliza Bailey. He died at the age of 6 months and 3 days. Also, William Lang, who was Bailey's son-in-law, is interred directly behind John Bailey.

(37). James S. Bailey was given full ownership of this share by his sisters on July 6, 1819. They had all jointly inherited the share from their father's estate. The release is found in Volume 8, page 95, of the De Peyster Papers.

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## APPENDIX A

### Swords Fabricated by John Bailey

John Bailey specialized in hunting swords of quality. High-ranking military officers of the eighteenth century preferred this style of sword, even though it was intended to be worn while hunting. The hunting sword is a short, light saber with a straight or slightly curved blade and usually no knuckle bow at the hilt. Bailey is considered to be one of the most important eighteenth century American sword makers. More of his swords have survived than those of any other colonial sword maker, except perhaps those of William Moulton of Newburyport, Massachusetts.

John Bailey inscribed his scabbard throats by the following method. He coated the metal surface with wax and then he wrote his name and location through the wax. An acid was applied, which etched the metal surface where the wax had been removed.

A compiled list of extant John Bailey made swords follows (No claim is made that this is a complete list).

(1). LOCATION: Fort Ticonderoga Museum (S-12)

OVERALL LENGTH: 30.5 inches

HILT: Silver dog's head pommel; ivory grip wrapped in silver.

COMMENTS: The scabbard is missing.

(2). LOCATION: Fort Ticonderoga Museum (S-14)

OVERALL LENGTH: 31.75 inches

HILT: Silver dog's head pommel; green stained ivory grip wrapped in silver.

COMMENTS: The blade is inscribed "1755" with a "running wolf" crudely engraved next to the date. The throat of the scabbard is inscribed "J Bailey / N YORK" on the reverse and "W Wykoff" on the obverse.

(3). LOCATION: Fort Ticonderoga Museum (S-296)

HILT: Silver lion's head pommel.

COMMENTS: The blade is inscribed "God Bless the Province of Massachusetts Bay" on the obverse and "Ticonderoga, May 10th, 1775" on the reverse. This sword was owned by Captain John H. Collister who is said to have accompanied Ethan Allen at the capture of Fort Ticonderoga on May 10, 1775.

(4). LOCATION: Metropolitan Museum of Art

OVERALL LENGTH: 32 inches

HILT: Silver lion's head pommel; ivory grip.

COMMENTS: The scabbard throat is inscribed "E. Payne" on the obverse and "J. Bailey / N. YORK" on the reverse.

(5). LOCATION: Massachusetts Historical Society

OVERALL LENGTH: 34 inches

HILT: Silver lion's head pommel; green tinted ivory grip.

COMMENTS: The throat of the scabbard is inscribed "Francis Dana / 1777" on the obverse and "J. Bailey / N. YORK Fecit" on the reverse.

(6). LOCATION: Ohio Historical Society

OVERALL LENGTH: 32.5 inches

HILT: Silver lion's head pommel; green tinted ivory grip.

COMMENTS: The scabbard throat is inscribed "J. Bailey - Fecit / Fredericksburgh" on the reverse and "H M Cannol" on the obverse.

(7). LOCATION: Jay Forman Collection

OVERALL LENGTH: 32.5 inches

HILT: Silver lion's head pommel; ivory grip wrapped with flat silver strip.

COMMENTS: The throat of the scabbard is inscribed "J. Bailey / Fredericksburgh."

(8). LOCATION: Smithsonian Institution

OVERALL LENGTH: 36 inches

HILT: Flat, rounded silver pommel with a shell design; green stained ivory grip wrapped with silver wire.

(9). LOCATION: Philadelphia Museum of Art

HILT: Silver lion's head pommel; ivory grip.

COMMENTS: The scabbard throat is inscribed "J Bailey, Fecit."

(10). LOCATION: Washington's Headquarters Museum in Newburgh, New York

HILT: Silver lion's head pommel.

COMMENTS: Surrendered by a British officer at the Battle of Saratoga to John W. Finch of the Dutchess County militia.

There is also one sword fabricated by John Bailey bearing a Verplanck's Point address; however, its present whereabouts is unknown. Verplanck's Point is very near Peekskill, New York,



Historical Marker In Fishkill, NY Commemorating John Bailey

**APPENDIX B****Summary of John Bailey's Recorded Land Conveyances  
within New York County****FIRST: Liber 43, Page 458**

TRANSACTION: Land sold by Nicholas Jones (Gentleman) to John Bailey (Cutler).

INDENTURE DATE: August 10, 1785.

SALE PRICE: 650 Pounds New York State currency.

WARD LOCATION: Dock Ward.

STREET LOCATION: Dock Street Wharf (Little Dock Street).

LOT DIMENSIONS: 70 feet in length and 23 feet 10 inches wide.

BUILDINGS: There were buildings or a building, but none are specifically mentioned.

MISC. COMMENTS: Apparently Bailey had been renting this property for 1 year before the actual sale. Also, Bailey assumed the remainder of an Indenture of Lease, which had been made between Nicholas Jones and John Keady (Tavern Keeper). This lease was effective on May 1, 1780 and ran for 14 years. This was probably Bailey's No. 20 / No. 21 Little Dock Street address.

**SECOND: Liber 49, Page 492**

TRANSACTION: Land sold by John & Ann Bailey (Cutler) to John Anderson (Grocer).

INDENTURE DATE: September 26, 1789.

SALE PRICE: 22 Pounds New York State currency.

WARD LOCATION: Out Ward.

STREET LOCATION: Orchard Street; Lot #1129.

BUILDINGS: None.

LOT DIMENSIONS: 87 feet 6 inches in length and 25 feet wide.

MISC. COMMENTS: This lot was part of the James DeLancey estate. James DeLancey was a former chief justice and lieutenant governor of the Colony of New York. His estate was confiscated after the Revolution because he was a Loyalist. It was sold between 1784 and 1786 for a total of \$234,198.75.

**THIRD: Liber 48, Page 173**

TRANSACTION: Land sold by John & Ann Bailey (Cutler) to Anthony L. Bleecker (Merchant).

INDENTURE DATE: February 1, 1792.

SALE PRICE: 1100 Pounds New York State currency.

WARD LOCATION: First Ward, formerly Dock Ward.

STREET LOCATION: (Little) Dock Street.

BUILDINGS: Dwelling House.

LOT DIMENSIONS: 88 feet in length and 16 feet wide

MISC. COMMENTS: This property was part of a water lot which was granted by the city on April 19, 1735 to Abraham Varick and Thomas Jeffreys. An annual rent of 14 shillings was to be paid to the city by the property owner. This was probably Bailey's No. 22 Little Dock Street address.

## FOURTH: Liber 61, Page 334

TRANSACTION: Land sold by John Bailey (Cutler) to William Lawrence and Wynant Van Zandt Junior (Merchants).

INDENTURE DATE: January 11, 1802

SALE PRICE: \$975.00 lawful money of the State of New York.

WARD LOCATION: Seventh Ward

STREET LOCATION: Between the road to Bayard's house and Oliver Street (late farm land of Nicholas Bayard Esq.).

BUILDINGS: Apparently none.

LOT DIMENSIONS: Three adjacent lots, each 25 feet wide and 100 feet in length.

MISC. COMMENTS: As shown by this sale of undeveloped property and the 1789 sale of undeveloped property to John Anderson, John Bailey invested in land just north and outside of the city limits. He probably made a good financial gain from these investments because the city grew quickly into this area. Bailey's wife, Ann, is not included in this indenture because she had died in March of 1800.

## FIFTH: Liber 443, Page 326

TRANSACTION: Land purchased by John Bailey from his daughter and son-in-law, Harriet and Peter Mabie.

INDENTURE DATE: October 18, 1804

SALE PRICE: \$360.48 lawful United States money.

WARD LOCATION: Not given.

STREET LOCATION: Not given.

LOT DIMENSIONS: Not given.

BUILDINGS: Not given.

MISC. COMMENTS: This purchase may have been the house in Mulberry Street that is listed in John Bailey's estate.

## SIXTH: Liber 115, Page 79

TRANSACTION: Land sold by John Bailey (Brass founder) to George Bennet and John W. Gale (Merchants).

INDENTURE DATE: October 23, 1804

SALE PRICE: \$7,500.00 Lawful United States money.

WARD LOCATION: First Ward

STREET LOCATION: Water Street

LOT DIMENSIONS: 70 feet in length and 23 feet 10 inches wide.

BUILDINGS: There were buildings or a building, but none are specifically mentioned.

MISC. COMMENTS: This is the same piece of property that Bailey purchased from Nicholas Jones in 1785. It is the No. 20 / No. 21 Little Dock Street address which later became No. 60 Water Street. It shows the name change of the street from Little Dock to Water Street. This document also proves that it was the same John Bailey who was first a cutler and later became a brass founder. After selling this property, Bailey moved directly to No. 27 Maiden Lane.



Section of  
NEW YORK CITY MAP of 1789 ENGRAVED by CORNELIUS TIEBOLT  
for the 1789 City Directory

- ① Bailey's Pre-Revolutionary War Residence — Wall Street across from the Merchants Coffee House
- ② Bailey's Post War Residence after 1794 — Water Street
- ③ Bailey's Final Residence -- Maiden Lane

## APPENDIX C

## New York City Directory Listings for John Bailey

## John Bailey:

| YEAR   | VOCATION                         | ADDRESS               |
|--------|----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1787   | Cutler & Brass Founder           | 22 Little Dock Street |
| 1789   | Cutler                           | 22 Little Dock Street |
| 1790   | Cutler                           | 22 Little Dock Street |
| 1791   | Cutler                           | 21 Little Dock Street |
| 1792   | Brass Founder                    | 21 Little Dock Street |
| 1793   | Brass Founder                    | 21 Little Dock Street |
| 1794   | Brass Founder & Ironmonger       | 60 Water Street *     |
| 1795   | Ironmonger & Founder             | 60 Water Street       |
| 1796   | Ironmonger & Founder             | 60 Water Street       |
| 1797   | Ironmonger & Founder             | 60 Water Street       |
| 1798   | Ironmonger & Founder             | 60 Water Street       |
| 1800   | Ironmonger & Founder             | 60 Water Street       |
| 1801   | Ironmonger & Founder             | 60 Water Street       |
| 1803   | Ironmonger & Founder             | 60 Water Street       |
| 1804-5 | Ironmonger & Founder<br>Merchant | 27 Maiden Lane        |
| 1805-6 | Ironmonger & Founder             | 27 Maiden Lane        |
| 1806-7 | Ironmonger & Founder             | 27 Maiden Lane        |

## John Bailey and son James S. Bailey:

| YEAR   | VOCATION               | ADDRESS        |
|--------|------------------------|----------------|
| 1807   | Ironmongers & Founders | 27 Maiden Lane |
| 1808   | Ironmongers & Founders | 27 Maiden Lane |
| 1809   | Ironmongers            | 27 Maiden Lane |
| 1810   | Ironmongers            | 27 Maiden Lane |
| 1811-2 | Ironmongers            | 27 Maiden Lane |
| 1813   | Ironmongers            | 27 Maiden Lane |
| 1814I  | Ironmongers            | 27 Maiden Lane |

## John Bailey:

| YEAR   | VOCATION   | ADDRESS        |
|--------|------------|----------------|
| 1815-6 | Ironmonger | 27 Maiden Lane |

\* 60 Water Street is the same location as 21 Little Dock Street.

Little Dock Street was merged into Water Street in 1794.

## APPENDIX D

### Bells Manufactured by John Bailey

The following is a compiled list of extant brass bells manufactured by John Bailey, apparently in partnership with George Hedderly.

(1). OWNER: Museum of the City of New York

CAST INSCRIPTION: John Bailey - New York - 1794

WEIGHT: 77 pounds

MOUTH DIAMETER: 13 inches

COMMENTS: This bell was the gift of Colonel and Mrs. Edgar W. Garbisch. It may be the alarm bell ordered for the watch house on Wall and Broad Streets, which was completed in early 1794.

(2). OWNER: Reformed Church, New Paltz, New York

CAST INSCRIPTION: I. Bailey - N. York

WEIGHT: Approximately 60 pounds

HEIGHT: Approximately 13.5 inches.

(3). OWNER: Private

CAST INSCRIPTION: I. Bailey - N. York - 1794

HEIGHT: 13 1/2 inches.

MOUTH DIAMETER: 11.5 inches.

Also, it is reported that John Bailey manufactured 22 bells in 1794 that were placed in new fortifications in New York harbor. The author has been unable to verify this claim; however, under orders from Congress, new fortifications were indeed erected in the harbor in 1794.

## APPENDIX E

### John Bailey's Last Will and Testament

I JOHN BAILEY of the City of New York Merchant being of sound mind and body do make and publish this as my and for my last Will and Testament as follows revoking all others. First, all my Estate real and personal, wheresoever situated, I give devise and bequeath unto my sons Augustus and James and my daughters Ann Holmes, Maria the wife of William Lang, Harriett the wife of Peter Mabie and Charlotte Booker to be divided among them share and share alike, the portion of the said Harriett or share to be disposed of and paid as here after mentioned. Second I hereby appoint my son James S. Bailey and John Downs of the City of New York Merchants, Executors of this my last Will and Testament whom or the Survivor of whom, it is my will shall have the exclusive control of the proportion or share of the said Harriett and pay the same of the interest there of to her alone from time to time, as they or the survivor of them shall think fit and proper to the exclusion of her husband and without any control over the same by him and after her decease to be paid to her children. Third and whereas my said son Augustus is and for a long time past has been insane and incapable of managing his own affairs. It is my Will that my said Executors place his proportion or share out at interest as they shall think most advisable and apply the interest thereof towards his necessities as they shall deem proper and upon his decease it is further my will that such his proportion or share shall survive and go to the remainder of my said sons and daughters in equal parts or to such of them as shall then be living. I Witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and Seal this Seventh day of January in the year of our Lord One thousand eight hundred and fifteen.

his

John X Bailey

mark

Signed Sealed delivered published and declared by the said John Bailey as and for his last Will and Testament in the presence of us, who have hereto subscribed our names in his presence of each other. Orange Webb, Francis Wade, James Jarvis, John Cooke.

Admitted to probate January 25, 1815.

**APPENDIX F**  
**Valuation of John Bailey's Estate**

James S. Bailey purchased from his sister, Maria Lang, her share of the inheritance from their father's estate. The indenture, dated October 19, 1815, is found starting on page 98 of Liber 112 of the Land and Property Conveyances of the City and County of New York. It includes the following appraisal of John Bailey's estate.

|   |                     |                 |
|---|---------------------|-----------------|
| Received by the executors of John Bailey deceased for account of his estate since his decease   | \$                  | 16,837.72       |
| James S. Bailey claim against the estate as partner of the firm of John Bailey and Son  | \$                  | 9,417.59        |
| Cash paid by executors at sundry times and to sundries persons a/c of the debts due by John Bailey funeral expenses etc. as per a/c current | \$                  | 13,766.53       |
|   | 4,358.94            | 3,061.19        |
|   | ballance            |                 |
| Due to the estate and yet remain unsettled  |                     |                 |
| Soloman Windsor owes  | \$                  | 397.41          |
| Sarah Billington  | 45.00               |                 |
| James Hewitt 19.37  | Enos Bussnell 95.53 | 114.90          |
| Capt. Barry 10 Wm. Ward 3.68  | 13.68               |                 |
| Mrs. Gen Hamilton 11.50   | J. Baker 7.37       | 18.87           |
| I. Pearson 15.  | Saml Redmond 1035.  | 1050.00         |
| E. Dana 125.  | E. Bunnels note 50. | <u>175.00</u>   |
| Carried over  | 1814.86             |                 |
|   | ballance            | 3,061.19        |
| Amount of debts brought over  | 1814.86             |                 |
| Childs & Batchelor  | 856.00              |                 |
| Bennent & Gale  | 4150.00             |                 |
| Silas Hubbel  | 275.00              |                 |
| Negro Wench   |                     |                 |
| House in Mulberry St  |                     |                 |
| Lot Land Champlain  | 800.00              |                 |
| Lot in Spring Street  | <u>1000.00</u>      |                 |
|   | 8895.86             |                 |
| Bank Stock divided or sold at   |                     | 8895.86         |
|   |                     | <u>13013.75</u> |
|   |                     | 24970.80        |